

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Examiner is thanked for the final Office Action mailed August 29, 2007. The status of the application is as follows:

- Claims 1-20 and 22-29 are pending. Claims 14-16, 19, 25, 28 and 29 have been amended. Claim 27 has been cancelled.
- Claims 14-16, 19, 27, 28 and 29 are objected to for minor informalities.
- Claims 27 and 28 are objected to for depending on a rejected base claim.
- Claims 25 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nelson et al. (US 6,583,420).
- Claim 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nelson et al. in view of Shaw, IV (US 4,039,836).

The objections and rejections are discussed below.

Allowed Claims 1-24

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 1-13, 17-18, and 20-24 are allowed. The Examiner is further thanked for indicating that claims 14-16 and 19 would be allowed if the minor informalities – lack of antecedent basis and claim dependency - noted in the subject Office Action were overcome. Claims 14-16 and 19 have been amended herein to cure the minor informalities. As such, applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 14-16 and 19.

Claims 25-29

Independent claim 25 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being unpatentable over Nelson et al. **Claim 27** directly depends from claim 25, and the Office has indicated that claim 27 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to

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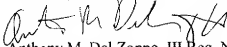
include all the limitations of the base claim and any interviewing claims, and rewritten to overcome the lack of antecedent basis noted in the subject Office Action. As such, independent claim 25 has been amended herein to include the limitations of claim 27 and to overcome the noted minor informalities, and claim 27 has been cancelled. **Claims 28 and 29**, which depend from claim 25, are objected to for lack of antecedent basis. These claims have been amended herein to cure the lack of antecedent basis. The dependency of claim 28 has also been amended as a consequence of cancelling claim 27. In light of the above, applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 25, 26, 28 and 29.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims distinguish patentably and non-obviously over the prior art of record. An early indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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